

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 888
By McDonald

A RESOLUTION to congratulate and commend Wilda Dodson and Bill Hudgins, winners of the 2004 Stellar Tribute Award from the Sumner Foundation.

WHEREAS, this legislative body is pleased to specially recognize those admirable Tennesseans who have risen to great heights in their chosen professions and who have contributed their time and resources in service to their fellow human beings; and

WHEREAS, such dedicated residents of our state are Wilda Dodson and Bill Hudgins of Gallatin, who were recently announced as the 2004 Stellar Tribute Award winners by the Sumner Foundation; and

WHEREAS, the Stellar Tribute Award is given annually by the Sumner Foundation to persons in the Sumner County area who have made significant contributions to their community, persons who give freely of their time, talents, and financial resources to make Sumner County a better place to live; and

WHEREAS, married for nearly 25 years, both Wilda Dodson and Bill Hudgins are extremely successful in their chosen professions and highly respected by their peers and colleagues, as well as by their many devoted friends and neighbors in Sumner County; and

WHEREAS, a native Tennessean, Wilda Dodson was born in Gallatin and attended Gallatin High School. She received a bachelor's degree in Economics from Rhodes College in Memphis and obtained her law degree from the University of Tennessee College of Law in 1977; and

WHEREAS, Wilda Dodson began her legal career with the Trust Department of Park Bank in Knoxville before relocating to Cleveland, Tennessee after her marriage to Mr. Hudgins. Becoming only the second woman attorney in Cleveland, she opened a small general practice

prior to accepting the position of Assistant District Attorney responsible for child support enforcement cases for four counties; and

WHEREAS, making a fortuitous decision, Ms. Dodson left the District Attorney's Office after two years to become an Investment Representative with Edward Jones Investments and is now in her twentieth year with this distinguished firm; she presently serves as a Limited Partner and has received numerous sales and leadership awards; and

WHEREAS, Bill Hudgins was born and raised in rural Virginia and is a graduate of Woodberry Forest School, a private boys high school in Orange, Virginia. He continued his education at Columbia University where he worked on the school paper before obtaining his undergraduate degree in English in 1972; and

WHEREAS, employed by his alma mater, Mr. Hudgins spent the next five years working at Columbia University before taking most of a year off and traveling solo around France and the United States, eventually returning to enroll in the graduate program at the University of Tennessee's College of Communications in Knoxville; and

WHEREAS, named Outstanding Graduate Student, Bill Hudgins served an internship as a general assignment reporter at the *Birmingham Post-Herald* (Ala.); before marrying Wilda Dodson and accepting a job with the *Cleveland Daily Banner* (TN); and

WHEREAS, during his tenure at the *Cleveland Daily Banner* Mr. Hudgins covered the local courts and county government and wrote a regular humor and opinion column; his intrepid investigative reporting led to the public disclosure of misdeeds by a city police commissioner which culminated in the commissioner's resignation, and exposed a failed pyramid investment scheme at a local college; and

WHEREAS, in 1982 Bill Hudgins relocated to Middle Tennessee to accept a job with *The Nashville Banner* where he served as a reporter and eventually assistant city editor during his five years employment with the newspaper; he next accepted a position with Buntin Public Relations in Nashville, first serving as an Account Executive and later as Editorial Director, overseeing the publication of newsletters and magazines for various clients; and

WHEREAS, in 1993 Mr. Hudgins joined his current employer, Hammock Publishing, where he serves as Editorial Director and oversees the production of newsletters, magazines,

and websites for corporate and non-corporate clients in a vast array of topic areas, including trucking, investments, healthcare, history, and education; and

WHEREAS, respected for their expertise and wisdom, Wilda Dodson and Bill Hudgins serve on numerous prestigious boards and committees. He is a member of the Gallatin Shalom Zone and oversees a Columbia University Alumni group that interviews prospective students for admission. She is a member of the board of Greater Gallatin and Friends of Gallatin Library; a Past President of both the Gallatin Chamber of Commerce and the United Chambers of Sumner County; a charter member of the Gallatin Junior Service League, where she serves on the Nominating Committee; a member of the Executive Board of Volunteer State Community College Foundation, where she serves on the Investment Committee; a member of the Sumner Foundation Board's Investment Committee; and one of the first female members of the Gallatin Noon Rotary Club; and

WHEREAS, in 2000 Wilda Dodson and Bill Hudgins, along with Ms. Dodson's mother, the late Billie C. Dodson, established the Dodson Family Foundation to provide financial assistance to worthy causes. Under their leadership, with Mr. Hudgins and Ms. Dodson serving as President and Secretary-Treasurer respectively, this noble organization has contributed major funding to the new Sumner County Health Department, now known as the Dodson Family Health Center, and provided key funding to the Gallatin Bicentennial Committee for the bust of Albert Gallatin which is on display inside Gallatin City Hall; and

WHEREAS, deeply committed to serving others, this outstanding couple lend their time and talents as volunteers for Habitat for Humanity, Rotary Club Christmas events for children, the Gallatin Cemetery Tour, and delivery of Christmas dinners for Meals on Wheels, in addition to providing significant financial support for Historic Cragfont, Rosemont, and the Sumner Museum; and

WHEREAS, it is readily apparent that Wilda Dodson and Bill Hudgins believe in the future of Sumner County, while treasuring and preserving its past, an attitude best exemplified by their joint funding of a scholarship for students at Volunteer State Community College and Ms. Dodson's restoration of the old Commerce Union Bank Building in Gallatin for her new

office, which made her an early proponent and practitioner of renovations of the town square;
and

WHEREAS, a devout couple of deep and abiding faith, Wilda Dodson and Bill Hudgins have been active members of Gallatin First United Methodist Church and Gallatin First Presbyterian Church over the years; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we pause in our deliberations to specially recognize this truly outstanding couple who are leading lives of purpose and devotion to others that are models for all to applaud and respectfully acknowledge; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend Wilda Dodson and Bill Hudgins on being selected as winners of the 2004 Stellar Tribute Award by the Sumner Foundation and thank them for their exemplary service to Sumner County and the good people of Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we extend to Ms. Dodson and Mr. Hudgins, our best wishes for continued success and satisfaction in all their future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy